

“JUNIOR JURY”

The interesting thing about Junior Jury last week was not so much in what was said but in what was not said. The general feeling seemed to be that it was ridiculous for children to feel that adults were not trustworthy. Yet if we look at it from the viewpoint of the child is it so ridiculous? What about the carelessly given promise, casually dropped in a moment of thoughtlessness? You and I may have really considered the implications of the promise and we may feel perfectly justified in reversing our decision at a later date but how does it look to our child? One of our own children has become wise enough now that if he gets a decision from either of his parents who happens to be at that moment either reading or preoccupied he says, “Daddy, do you know what you just said?”

Individual instances of this problem are probably not of too serious a nature. Like most of the problems of childhood, a little waiting, not too much worrying, and they will pass away. Perhaps it is most serious when your children no longer feel that they can complain about it, since then distrust has deepened to the point where the child no longer feels that it is of any use to complain about the situation and the basic trust in a dependable parent which is so valuable to a child, may be crumbling away.

Perhaps it is in a situation such as this that the family council situation as suggested by Russell Buglass is most valuable. A get together of the whole family, whether it is based on formal invitations as Russell suggested or not, is a means of establishing communication between the family members. If we talked to, or rather listened to our children oftener we would understand better how they felt about us and our actions in relationship to them.

Both the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Home and School Associations are interested in the solution of everyday problems through discussions. Mutual understanding between adult and child, between adult and adult, and between one group and another would do much to settle the problems of our home and of our community.